

Reaching Out in Region 4

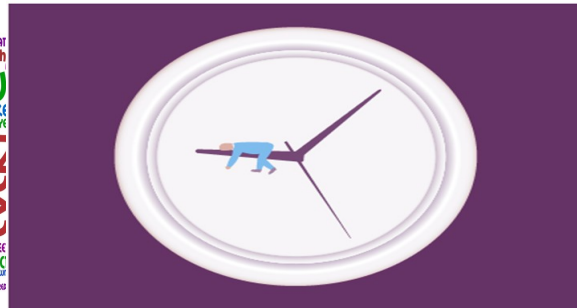
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Volume 2 Issue 7

Effective Use of Time

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The Power of Making Walk-throughs a Priority

Cervone and Martinez-Miller (2007) describe classroom walkthroughs as a tool to “drive a cycle of continuous improvement by focusing on the effects of instruction.” Ginsberg and Murphy (2002) discuss some specific benefits: Administrators become more familiar with the school’s curriculum and teachers’ instructional practices; Administrators can gauge the climate of a school (Are students engaged? Are cross-curricular concepts a part of everyday teaching? Are new teachers catching on?)

“The best walk-throughs give teachers relevant, real-time data on their instruction ... Feedback on the walk-throughs should be specific to observed behaviors, focused, and descriptive of the level of performance observed.”

A team atmosphere develops as teachers and administrators examine instruction and student motivation and achievement; Administrators establish themselves as campus leaders and instructional mentors, influencing teaching, learning, and ongoing school renewal; and students see that both administrators and teachers value instruction and learning.

Graf and Werlinich (n.d) recommend these steps for principals planning for classroom walkthroughs: Conduct a preliminary walkthrough to begin collecting baseline data “Observers ... are not simply wandering from classroom to classroom to gather general perceptions of what is going on.”

Notice whether students appear to be oriented to the work; Review the curricular objectives being taught; Observe instructional practices; “Walk the walls” to look for information on what has been taught previously or may be taught in the future; and note the existence of any safety or health issues.

Other models have observers spending more time in each classroom, for example, to provide partici-

pants with opportunities to talk with students. Reflecting after the walkthrough.

One of the principals interviewed by Rossi (2007) was very specific about the benefit of using walkthroughs in his school: The more opportunities I have to get into the classrooms, the more information I have to talk with teachers about and the more that we collectively research good practice and talk about good practice and tap in on each others’ experiences and practices ... They [don’t just] come to talk with me about discipline problems, they come to talk about instruction

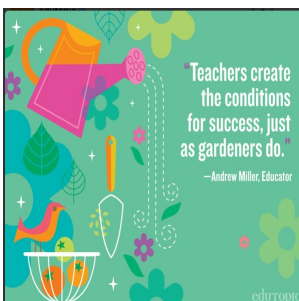
Walk-throughs lead to a deliberate pause in the often hurried pace of teachers and school leaders; they establish a purposeful time for a close look at the data that have been collected; A willingness to be open to other points of view; An effort to consciously process your own thoughts—not simply leaving the classroom with general impressions; an intentional effort to gain new insights and understandings from both the observation and the analysis of data; and an action based on the findings of the observations.

In Experiences of Schools Using Walkthroughs by Rossi (2007) Rossi found staff members believed the walkthroughs conducted in their schools had affected instruction with positive outcomes that included: Teacher sharing of best practices; Increased principal awareness of what is happening in classrooms; Increase in teacher time on task; better principal understanding of Better principal understanding of professional development needs; improvement in the quality of student work; improved quality of conversations about instruction; and development of a common language around instruction. The key was making walk-throughs an intentional priority.

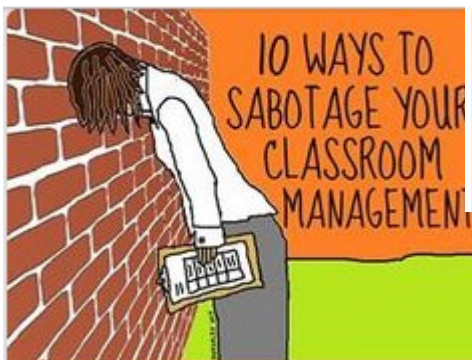
"WATCH YOUR THOUGHTS, THEY BECOME YOUR BELIEFS. WATCH YOU BELIEFS, THEY BECOME YOUR WORDS. WATCH YOUR WORDS, THEY BECOME YOUR ACTIONS. WATCH YOUR ACTIONS, THEY BECOME YOUR HABITS. WATCH YOUR HABITS, THEY BECOME YOUR CHARACTER."

Vince Lombardi

Video Link



Adapted from Nancy Protheroe



1. **SMILE WHEN STUDENTS TRY TO GET YOU OFF-TRACK.** When you need them to be serious, but they keep goofing around, smiling just encourages them.
2. **HANDLE PROBLEMS PUBLICLY.** Addressing misbehavior in a public way risks embarrassing the student. This can make her retaliate, and next thing you know, you're dealing with a power struggle.
3. **ONLY GIVE VERBAL INSTRUCTIONS.** So many problems start with students not understanding what they are supposed to do, especially when teachers only speak directions instead of writing them.
4. **ADDRESS THE CLASS BEFORE EVERYONE IS QUIET.** Talk before everyone is listening and some won't hear you. Are they bad listeners, is your timing off?
5. **TALK WHEN STUDENTS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE READING... AND VICE VERSA.** The brain can't do both at once.
6. **PHRASE EVERYTHING AS A "DON'T."** If you tell a seventh grade boy not to tap his pencil, he still has pencil tapping on the brain.
7. **ALLOW BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS TO DRAG ON AND ON.** This not only takes away valuable instructional time, it also annoys the heck out of the other students, who are forced to sit and watch.
8. **STAY AT THE FRONT OF THE ROOM.** If you're always at the front of your classroom, you can't pick up on trouble in the early stages.
9. **ONLY FOCUS ON THE PROBLEMS.** You'll get more cooperation if you give equal (or more) attention to the behaviors you want to see.
10. **TAKE THINGS PERSONALLY.** Interpreting student misbehavior as a personal affront just makes things worse.

Jenniffer Gonzalez

Resources

- [K-12 Stem Reading Topics](#)
- [Paired Texts and Question Sets](#)
- [Star Thrower Motivational Clip of the Week](#)
- [7 Tips for Successful Collaboration](#)
- [Collaborating Across Disciplines](#)
- [3 Ways to Make Meaningful connections with Your Students](#)
- [Fostering an Academic Mindset](#)
- [Application to give Input on New Science Standards](#)
- [CPR/AED Requirements](#)
- [Diploma Seals Ordering Form](#)
- [FASFA Information Sharing Initiative](#)
- [ISTA Good Teaching Conference](#)



Making Time for Professional Development

The ultimate goal of literacy professional development for teachers is for students to improve their reading and writing skills. Before this goal can be met, three stages must be completed:

1. Quality professional development must be provided.
2. Teachers must leave the professional development with improved knowledge and skills. Teachers must apply that knowledge to improve their instructional practices. Here are some of the best practices identified in the report:
 - Professional development content should focus on the 'concrete' tasks of teaching rather than abstract discussions of teaching.
 - The context for providing the PD is important:
 - PD is more effective when it is a coherent part of a school's reform efforts.
 - PD should be grounded in and intertwined with teachers' ongoing practice.
 - Opportunities for teacher collaboration during initial and follow up PD are essential.
 - School-based, peer coaching is essential to help teachers apply instructional strategies that are learned in initial PD. Coaching is the key to providing effective, long-term follow up that is necessary to help teachers incorporate improved instructional practices both in the short and long-term.
 - The design of PD experiences must address how teachers learn:
 - Opportunities should be provided for active learning, including modeling of sought-after best practices and time for teachers to practice and reflect on new strategies.
 - PD must be intense and sustained over a period of time.
 - Professional communities should be established that enable teachers to visit and observe

- [Teachers are Learning Designers](#)
- [ChildCare Indiana: Free Child Care Search](#)
- [Illustrative Mathematics Resources](#)
- [ECESC Workshop Offerings](#)
- [Information from the Indiana Gang Network](#)
- [ReadWrite Think](#)
- [Setting a Purpose for Reading](#)
- [Readability Formulas](#)
- [Before and After the Walkthrough: What to do to Improve Instructional Rigor](#)

